



DEUTSCH-SCHWEIZERISCHE INTERNATIONALE SCHULE
GERMAN SWISS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL | 德瑞國際學校



GERMAN SWISS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

IBDP Options 2026



Welcome to the International Baccalaureate Diploma at GSIS

Welcome to the GSIS Options Guide for the IB Diploma programme. In this booklet, you will find all the information you need to make your choice of subjects for the IB Diploma that you will follow in Years 12 & 13 at GSIS.

The guide also provides information about the Diploma programme as a whole, its philosophy and the elements that make up the core of the Diploma programme.

At GSIS, we strive to enable our students to access opportunities that will see them grow into balanced, caring, independently minded, global citizens.

GSIS IB Options Process

The Options process at GSIS is designed to help you make the right choices. It is important that you create a programme of study that is right for you as an individual and in terms of your future university and career aspirations. You should make sure that you seek advice from different people: subject teachers, class teachers, parents and the University Counsellors. Listen to all the advice but make sure you come to your own decision. You will study these subjects for two years and the grades you achieve will determine where you can go to university, so don't choose a subject just because your friend is doing it or because your parents think it is a good idea. Aim to make your own decisions.

Although these decisions are important, try not to let the process become too stressful. For some subjects such as Engineering and Medicine, universities may have specific requirements but, for most courses, a range of different subjects is acceptable. If you focus your Diploma Programme on the areas you are most interested in, then it is likely that you will be studying what you need for the courses to which you will eventually apply, but you should try to review university requirements prior to making your final subject choices.

As we explain later in this Guide, universities and colleges around the world welcome applicants from the IB Diploma programme. They understand the challenge and rigour involved and it gives them a good sense of the quality of the candidate. Admissions tutors know that successful IB Diploma candidates are likely to thrive in Higher Education. As a school, we know that the IB Diploma programme gives you the best possible preparation for Higher Education and the best possible chance of gaining admittance to the institution and course of your choice.

We hope you will find this Guide inspiring; the subject pages are written by teachers and they give a strong sense of the subject passion that lies at the heart of an GSIS education.

The Diploma programme is demanding, but it is an extraordinarily rich experience that will shape you for life. As a DP student, you join a global community of learners, 'internationally minded people who, recognising their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.'^{*}

* *What is an IB Education?* August 2013, IBO



What is the Diploma Programme?

The Diploma programme (DP) is a two-year pre-university course. It is best summarised by the programme model below:



All students in the Diploma programme must study six subjects chosen from the following areas:

- Group 1** Studies in Language and Literature
- Group 2** Language Acquisition
- Group 3** Individuals and Societies
- Group 4** Sciences
- Group 5** Mathematics
- Group 6** The Arts

Three of these subjects are taken at the more demanding Higher Level (HL), three at Standard Level (SL). Students at GSIS may choose to take an additional subject from Group 3 or 4 in Group 6. In addition to studying six subjects, all students will study the Theory of Knowledge (TOK) course, complete an Extended Essay (EE) and fulfil the objectives for Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS).

How is the IB Diploma score calculated?

The Diploma programme is scored out of 45 points. This is the maximum points score that any student can achieve. Each of the six subjects is worth a maximum of 7 points, making a combined total of 42 points. The remaining 3 points are awarded from the Core and are based on the student's performance in Theory of Knowledge and the Extended Essay. Although there are no actual points for CAS, failure to meet the CAS objectives will result in the Diploma being withheld.





Grading

Grading in the Diploma is criterion-referenced. This means that each student's performance is measured against well-defined levels of achievement, which are consistent from one examination session to the next. Grades are not awarded on a curve to a certain percentage of candidates. In theory, if every student demonstrated a Level 7 achievement on an examination, then they should all be awarded the top Level.

Each of the six subjects is given a numerical grade as follows:

7	Excellent
6	Very good
5	Good
4	Satisfactory
3	Mediocre
2	Poor
1	Very poor

All students must achieve at least 24 points, submit an Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge work which are of at least a D grade standard and meet the CAS objectives to be awarded a Diploma. IB Diploma candidates take their final examinations in May of Year 13 and will receive their results shortly after they leave Year 13, in early July.



Subjects offered at German Swiss International School

Group 1 Language A: Studies in Language and Literature	English Language and Literature HL & SL
	English Literature HL & SL
Group 2 Language B: Language Acquisition	German B HL & SL
	Chinese B HL & SL
	French B HL & SL
	Ab Initio German (SL only)
	Ab Initio Spanish (SL only)
or (additional) Language A: Studies in Language and Literature	German A Literature SL
	Chinese A Language and Literature SL
Group 3 Individuals and Societies	Economics HL & SL
	Geography HL & SL
	History HL & SL
	Social and Cultural Anthropology (SCA) HL & SL
Group 4 Sciences	Biology HL & SL
	Chemistry HL & SL
	Computer Science HL & SL
	Physics HL & SL
Group 5 Mathematics	Mathematics: Analysis and approaches HL
	Mathematics: Analysis and approaches SL
	Mathematics: Applications and interpretation HL
	Mathematics: Applications and interpretation SL
Group 6 The Arts (or electives)	Music HL & SL
	Visual Arts HL & SL
	Theatre HL & SL
	A second Group 3 subject or A second Group 4 subject

Entry Requirements

As a prerequisite for entry to the IB Diploma Programme at GSIS, a strong set of IGCSE (or similar) grades are required. Generally, we would expect a Grade B (or equivalent) or better for subjects studied at SL and a Grade A (or equivalent) or better for subjects studied at HL. For Group 3 subjects, these requisite grades may be in any Humanities subject and not necessarily the one that the student opts for in the IBDP.



Language Pathways in the IB Diploma

Group 2 (Language B) is described as Language Acquisition, as such students should be learning the language. **Students should not opt for a Language Acquisition subject in a language in which they are already fluent.**

For students who have a language background similar to their option for Language B (e.g. the language is spoken at home or has been studied to a high level previously) their choice will be reviewed by the school, and this may result in them being required to select a different language option.

German Swiss International School recommends that all IBDP Students strongly consider selecting one of the available options in German: German A Literature; German B (SL or HL); German ab initio as suits their level of development in this language.

Note that German A Literature leads to the prestigious Bilingual Diploma. *Ab Initio* ('from the beginning') German B is a course for students with no, or very little, prior experience in German, and this is the recommended choice for students joining GSIS in Year 12.

French, one of the national languages of Switzerland, is offered as a language B course at both HL and SL. Regrettably, we are not able to offer an ab initio course in French, so some prior experience (equivalent to IGCSE level) is required.

Chinese A Language & Literature (SL) is offered to students proficient in Chinese and, like German A, this leads to the bilingual diploma.

For students who have strong reasons for not selecting one of the above courses, we also offer Chinese B at both HL and SL but, as above, students already fluent in Chinese are not eligible to opt for Chinese B. Where necessary, a student's level of fluency will be evaluated by the faculty. Those who are adjudged to be fluent will not be permitted to take language B.

Please note that, in Chinese B, all oral examinations are conducted in Mandarin. Chinese A oral examinations may be conducted in Mandarin or in Cantonese.

As additional pathway, we are also able to offer an ab initio course in Spanish (SL). This course is only available in exceptional circumstances for students who do not have a viable pathway in German, Chinese or French.

To ensure the quality of the student experience, the school does not offer or endorse online language courses through third parties.

Group 2 option selection is one of the most convoluted of all the choices to be made. Students and parents should seek specific advice when needed as to the correct pathway for them as individuals. The school



routinely reviews all language choices to ensure that we are compliant with IBO recommendations and regulations.

Please also note that, with a wide array of offerings, and a relatively small cohort of students, there is the possibility that one or more Group 2 subjects may not be viable in a particular year. Experience shows that German B and Chinese B will always run. However, whether we can run courses in some or all of French B, German A, Chinese A, ab initio German, ab initio Spanish depends upon student eligibility and, to a degree, on staffing constraints.

At the time of the options, students are advised to select the Group 2 subject that best matches their experience and preference. However, it must be made clear that there is no guarantee that the Group 2 selections will be possible for every case. Individual parents and students will be contacted directly as required after our internal review of Group 2 selections.

Selecting a subject from Group 6

Although it is possible to select an additional, or elective, subject in Group 6, the school encourages students to take an arts subject as part of their IB Diploma Programme to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum that will offer an appropriate challenge, as well as providing the opportunity to formally enhance creative and collaborative skills. Students are advised to think carefully about their choice of subject in Group 6 to ensure that they meet the required challenge of the IB Diploma.

What is the difference between Standard and Higher Level?

You must choose six subjects from the list above. Three of these you must choose to study at Standard Level and three of them you must study at Higher Level. This arrangement means that you can pursue areas of personal interest and intellectual strength within the context of a broad and balanced curriculum.

Please note that the number of points available for a HL and a SL course is the same, 7 points for each subject.



The IBDP Core

What is Theory of Knowledge?

The Theory of Knowledge (TOK) course is unique to the IB Diploma programme. The course encourages students to think about the nature and construction of knowledge, to reflect on the process of learning in all the subjects they study as part of their Diploma Programme course, and to make connections across them. TOK is a taught course and is a part of every IBDP student's weekly timetable.

The TOK course is assessed by the following:

- 1 An Object Exhibition where students select a prompt chosen from 32 options and students choose 3 objects that represent 3 related real-life scenarios and write a 950-word description.
- 2 A 1,600-word essay on a prompt chosen from 6 provided by the IBO.
- 3 The Object Exhibition is completed in Year 12 and the Essay is completed in Year 13.

Recent TOK Essay titles include:

- 1 Can there be knowledge that is independent of culture? Discuss with reference to mathematics **and one other** area of knowledge.
- 2 To what extent do you agree with the claim that "there's a world of difference between truth and facts" (Maya Angelou)? Answer with reference to **two** areas of knowledge
- 3 Is there solid justification for regarding knowledge in the natural sciences more highly than knowledge in another area of knowledge? Discuss with reference to the natural sciences and one other area of knowledge.

What is the Extended Essay?

All IB Diploma students must complete an Extended Essay. The Extended Essay is a piece of work where you have the opportunity to show knowledge, understanding and enthusiasm about a topic of your choice.

The Extended Essay promotes high-level research, writing skills, intellectual discovery, and creativity. You will have the opportunity to engage in personal research in a subject and topic of your choice, under the guidance of an assigned supervisor (a teacher in the school). The Extended Essay topic must come from the list of approved subjects. That list includes all the subjects offered in the IB Diploma programme at GSIS. You may also do a cross-subject extended essay which combines two subjects for an interdisciplinary approach.

You will begin the Extended Essay in the second semester of Year 12, working with a supervisor who will guide you through the process. You will submit your completed essay by the end of June in Year 12. The Extended Essay is presented as a formal piece of scholarship containing no more than 4000 words. The bulk of the work for the Extended Essay takes place outside of class time.



Creativity, Activity & Service (CAS)

All IB Diploma students must fulfil the CAS requirements. Although there are no points for CAS, it is an essential part of the Diploma programme and helps to ensure that students continue to develop beyond the classroom. Most importantly, it ensures that the IB student does not only know things about the world, but also acts.

- Over the two years students must demonstrate that, through CAS activities, they have:
- Increased their awareness of their own strengths and areas for growth
- Undertaken new challenges
- Planned and initiated activities
- Worked collaboratively with others
- Shown perseverance and commitment in their activities
- Engaged with issues of global importance
- Considered the ethical implications of their actions
- Developed new skills

In addition to planning and undertaking your CAS activities, you must regularly reflect on them and build up a portfolio of evidence. To help you with this, GSIS manages the CAS programme through ManageBac.

IBDP Assessment and Moderation Procedures

IBDP assessment procedures are designed to emphasize process rather than content and to achieve a balanced assessment of each candidate's performance. Various assessment methods are used in order to take into account different learning styles and cultural experiences, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities. Conventional external examinations are complemented by internal assessment conducted by teachers. The method of subject assessment is defined with reference to specific assessment criteria and will consist of some or all of the following:

- **External Assessment: Written Examinations**

These may include essays and short answer questions, document and data-based questions, comprehension exercises.

- **Oral Examinations**

These are conducted according to procedures established by the IBO.

- **Internal Assessment**

According to the requirements of the subject, this may take the form of guided coursework, project work, field work, practical and/or laboratory work. All internal assessment is subject to external moderation by the IBO, which is rigorously conducted and reported.



Assessment and The Core

- The EE and TOK essay are externally assessed.
- The TOK Exhibition is internally assessed and externally moderated.
- CAS is designed and implemented by the school and all activities are monitored internally.
- Up to three points may be added to the total score awarded for individual subjects, based on a combined score from the EE and TOK assessments. A candidate who writes a good EE and whose performance in TOK is judged to be satisfactory will be awarded +1 point. A candidate who is awarded an E grade for the Extended Essay or TOK will not be awarded the diploma.

		Theory of Knowledge					
		Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade E	No Grade (N)
Extended Essay	Grade A	3	3	2	2	Failing Condition	
	Grade B	3	2	2	1		
	Grade C	2	2	1	0		
	Grade D	2	1	0	0		
	Grade E	Failing Condition					
	No Grade (N)	Failing Condition					

Award of the IB Diploma

The IBDP will be awarded to candidates where the following requirements have been met:

1. CAS requirements have been met.
2. The candidate's total points are 24 or more.
3. There is no "N" awarded for theory of knowledge, the extended essay or for a contributing subject.
4. There is no grade E awarded for theory of knowledge and/or the extended essay.
5. There is no grade 1 awarded in a subject/level.
6. There are no more than two grade 2s awarded (HL or SL).
7. There are no more than three grade 3s or below awarded (HL or SL).
8. The candidate has gained 12 points or more on HL subjects (for candidates who register for four HL subjects, the three highest grades count).
9. The candidate has gained 9 points or more on SL subjects (candidates who register for two SL subjects must gain at least 5 points at SL).
10. The candidate has not received a penalty for academic misconduct from the Final Award Committee



University Recognition

The IB Diploma is internationally respected as a world-class pre-university qualification that provides access to the most competitive universities and degree courses around the world.

Why do Universities value IB Students?

- IB students are prepared for academic success.
- IB students are more likely than others to enrol in and graduate from selective higher education institutions.
- Based on their experiences, IB students possess a broader range of skills that enhance their ability to adapt and contribute to university life.
- IB students demonstrate a level of emotional and intellectual maturity for managing the demands of challenging coursework and make meaningful contributions.
- They have extensive experience doing independent research and presenting what they have learned through presentations, papers and other projects.
- They think critically and draw on diverse perspectives that reflect an international outlook.
- Participation in the IB Diploma Programme shows that students have excelled in multiple and diverse academic challenges and is a strong predictor for success in university.**

** IBO http://www.ibo.org/recognition/documents/IBRecognitionbrochure_FinalV2.pdf

IB is well known to us as excellent preparation. Success in an IB programme correlates well with success at Harvard. We are pleased to see the credential of the IB Diploma Programme on the transcript.

Marlyn McGrath Lewis

Assistant Dean of Admissions, Harvard University, USA



Subject Choice Guidance in Relation to University Applications

The University Guidance department is available to help guide students through the process of applying to universities worldwide. They are also able to guide students in their choice of HL/SL subjects in relation to university prerequisites. For most degree courses, universities like students to have a breadth of experience academically, presenting with a blend of arts, humanities, sciences, language acquisition, literature and mathematics. The IBDP is designed to give students this breadth. Universities around the world recognise and appreciate the broad and rigorous education that the IBDP gives students and this will be a huge asset for most degree courses.

It is recommended to base the selection of subjects on the following criteria, and in this order:

- Academic interest
- Personal interests, skills and aptitudes
- Entry requirements for degree course or careers

“Diploma Programme students are well-rounded, multifaceted, multi-skilled and have studied in depth. They have good time-management skills. They score higher than students in other national systems, and the IB score is worldwide the same measure.”

Hrilina Lock

Undergraduate Admissions Manager, London School of Economics, UK

It is difficult to make very wrong choices in the IB Diploma as it forces students to maintain a breadth of subjects. It is important, however, to give some thought to your possible Higher Education ambitions before making your final choices and to consult the University Guidance department especially about the choice of HL subjects. We are here to guide students through the process of preparing for and applying to university, and look forward to working with students and parents through this exciting phase.



The following guidance is particularly appropriate for those students who may want to apply for very specific degree courses (particularly in the UK and Hong Kong) at high-ranking universities. Please be aware that this guidance is for information only and that specific requirements do vary between universities and courses, and sometimes from year to year. If you have a specific destination or course in mind, it is important to research this and to consult with our University Guidance team regarding your specific needs.

Medicine/Dentistry

In order to have the widest possible choice of medical/dental schools the following choices are generally advisable:

- Chemistry IB Higher Level is essential for most courses.
- Biology Higher Level at IB is required by many medical schools.
- Mathematics at HL is generally not required (Cambridge is an exception which requires HL Maths)
- Highly competitive universities are happy to see two sciences at Higher Level

Veterinary Science

This is a highly competitive course, so it is advisable to have two sciences at HL (one of which must be Chemistry). Mathematics at Higher Level, or a grade 7 at Standard Level, are also often required.

Natural Sciences

For this very competitive course it is important to have as much science and Mathematics as possible at IB Higher Level.

Economics, Physics, Engineering and Mathematics

- Many selective universities require candidates to take Mathematics at IB Higher Level for these courses.
- Most Universities that require HL Mathematics will accept either Analysis and Approaches or Applications and Interpretations. Some highly selective US universities may prefer HL Analysis and Approaches for competitive business and engineering degrees.
- HL Physics is highly recommended for Engineering courses as well as Physics at university

Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE)

- For this course, it is not a requirement to be taking all of these individual subjects at IB but it is useful to have studied at least Economics, because it demonstrates interest.
- Mathematics and History or Geography are also highly relevant subjects and may improve chances of acceptance to very competitive courses.



Law

- There are no specific subject requirements. One can study arts or sciences or a combination. As grade requirements are high it is important to study subjects that you will do well in.
- It can be helpful to demonstrate both analytical (logic) and essay writing skills across your subjects. This makes contrasting subjects advantageous.
- Languages are also useful and can enable you to study a European/English law combination.

English

- Some universities like to see a modern or a classical language, with English Literature at IB Higher Level often an additional requirement.
- Universities are usually pleased to see other essay-writing subjects in conjunction with English Literature HL, such as History.

Architecture

- Visual Arts is highly recommended, preferably at Higher Level as most universities will require you to submit a portfolio of work.
- Some universities require or prefer Mathematics and/or Physics at HL

Psychology

- Many universities require at least one science at HL. It is recommended that this be Chemistry where possible
- Strong Mathematics is also preferred

Finally, it should go without saying that for most other subjects it is recommended and/or highly desirable to study the relevant discipline to Higher Level if it is available, e.g. HL History in order to study History at university. You should also think carefully in Year 12 about your choice of Extended Essay topic and how you might use that to demonstrate your interests to universities and colleges.

Studying in Germany or Switzerland

For students interested in Germany or Switzerland as a university destination there are very specific requirements that must be met. Please consult with your counsellor if you are considering studying in either of these countries.

German Universities ask for the following minimum requirements:

- 1 group 3 subject



- Two Languages at A or B Level. If at Language A, these can be HL or SL. If Language B, these must be HL.
- 1 group 4 (Biology, Chemistry or Physics only). As GSIS is an approved school on the KMK Maths Vectors List, Maths may be HL or SL
- 1 of the 3 HL subjects must be Maths, a Language or a Natural Science
- No subject switch during the DP is allowed.

24 points is the minimum total from the 6 subject groups with a minimum score of a 4 in all subjects is required. Only one score below a 4 is allowed, if a 3 is obtained it can be compensated for with another subject scoring 5 or above.

A German Language Certification is compulsory for courses taught in German– our school offers the Sprachdiplom II, which is recognised as valid document in all of Germany’s universities.

GSIS students can meet all German admissions requirements above. The specific German recognition requirements are given at Vereinbarung über die Anerkennung des „International Baccalaureate Diploma/ Diplôme du Baccalauréat International“.

Requirements for Swiss universities can vary by canton and institution and should be thoroughly researched in advance.

Timeline of the IB Options Process

The options process starts officially in January of Year 11, although we know that students are thinking about their options long before this time. We have already outlined the options process to Year 11 students and, during the coming weeks, students will receive further information from subject teachers, class teachers and our University Counsellors.

Parents and students are invited to our Options Evening in which the options process is explained in detail. This usually takes place on in January of Year 11 2024. This evening includes presentations by the IBDP team as well as opportunities to talk to subject staff.

The IB Diploma Options forms are due to be submitted to the Year 11 Class Teachers in March. The exact date appears upon the Options Form itself. After this date, we begin to construct the school timetable. Classes are constructed within timetable blocks according to student choice. It may not be possible for every student to have their initial combination, but the school aims to make this happen wherever possible.

After submission of the Options Form, we can entertain requests from students to change their optional subjects, where such requests have a sound academic rationale. Requests for change are treated on an



individual basis yet may not be possible due to timetable constraints. We know that some students may wish to change after the summer, or after the commencement of the course, but students and parents need to be aware that it may not be possible to change at this point. All subject change requests take time to process, so a degree of patience is required from the requestors.

No options changes are possible after mid-September of Year 12.

It is really important therefore, that students and parents make the right decision based on enjoyment of subject, passion, university destination requirements, and advice from staff.

The Library

The library offers a wide variety of quality print and digital resources to support students in coursework and revision, including an online platform and 24/7 access to subscribed academic databases.

Over the course of the IB Diploma, students will learn how to select and evaluate appropriate information resources, how to use higher level sources such as scholarly databases and how to correctly use the Harvard referencing system in their work. Students will understand how scholarly research differs from casual information use. They will also understand the ethical implications of their work and how to be academically honest and responsible. Ultimately, these skills and understandings will prepare students to be successful in university.





The IB Learner Profile

The International Baccalaureate learner profile describes a broad range of human capacities and responsibilities that go beyond academic success. They imply a commitment to help all members of the school community learn to respect themselves, others and the world around them.

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners we strive to be:

Inquirers

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

Knowledgeable

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

Thinkers

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.



Communicators

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

Principled

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

Open-Minded

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

Risk-Takers

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenge.

Balanced

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives -intellectual, physical, and emotional - to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

Reflective

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

The IB Learner Profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.



Your Option Choices

As you go through this process you may find that you change your mind a number of times, as there could be a number of different options to choose from. Use the grid below to record your choices but do think carefully about what you want to do and possible university pathways.

	Combination A	Combination B	Combination C
Group 1			
Group 2			
Group 3			
Group 4			
Group 5			
Group 6			



Important Contact Information

Head of English International Stream	Mr Simon Misso-Veness	smisso-veness@gsis.edu.hk
Head of ESD	Mr Ken Stevenson	kstevenson@gsis.edu.hk
Deputy Head of ESD	Ms Susan Hood	shood@gsis.edu.hk
IB Diploma Coordinator	Mr Dan Stamp	dstamp@gsis.edu.hk
Head of University Guidance	Ms Claire Wilkins	cwilkins@gsis.edu.hk
Head of Y12 & Y13	Ms Hannah Booth	hbooth@gsis.edu.hk
Assistant Head of Y12	Ms Kate Moran	kmoran@gsis.edu.hk
GROUP 1 STUDIES IN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE		
Head of English	Ms Deborah Crouch	dcrouch@gsis.edu.hk
GROUP 2 LANGUAGE ACQUISITION		
Head of German	Mr Valentin Pappert	vpappert@gsis.edu.hk
Head of Mandarin	Ms Ita Lam	ilam@gsis.edu.hk
Head of French / Spanish	Ms Julie Bisailon	jbisailon@gsis.edu.hk
GROUP 3 INDIVIDUALS AND SOCIETIES		
Head of Economics	Mr John Leeds	jleeds@gsis.edu.hk
Head of Geography	Ms Anne Stevenson	astevenson@gsis.edu.hk
Head of History	Mr Daniel Santella	dsantella@gsis.edu.hk
Teacher of Social & Cultural Anthro.	Ms Lucy Tyrrell	ltyrrell@gsis.edu.hk
GROUP 4 SCIENCES		
Head of Biology	Ms Jane Colquhoun	jcolquhoun@gsis.edu.hk
Head of Chemistry	Ms Liz McCardle	emccardle@gsis.edu.hk
Head of Physics	Mr John Shearman	jshearman@gsis.edu.hk
Head of Computer Science	Ms Rashmi Majithia	rmajithia@gsis.edu.hk
GROUP 5 MATHEMATICS		
Head of Mathematics	Ms Carly Ellis	cellis@gsis.edu.hk
GROUP 6 THE ARTS		
Head of Music	Mr William Goldring	wgoldring@gsis.edu.hk
Head of Drama	Ms Phoebe Brown	pbrown@gsis.edu.hk
Head of Visual Arts	Mr Andrew Hull	ahull@gsis.edu.hk
THE CORE		
EE Coordinator	Mr Philip Truman	ptruman@gsis.edu.hk
ToK Coordinator	Mr Daniel Santella	dsantella@gsis.edu.hk
CAS Coordinator	Mr Robert Markwick	rmarkwick@gsis.edu.hk



Group 1
Studies in Language and Literature

English Language and Literature HL & SL

The English Language and Literature course is a combination of the study of language and literature that presents students with the opportunity to explore language as a dynamic process. Through the study of texts chosen from a variety of sources, genres and media, students develop an awareness and understanding of how meaning in language is created and shaped by culture and society. Students will learn how to read and think critically about the relationships between text, audience and purpose, as well as how language influences the individual's view of the world.

The appreciation of literary techniques and genre forms an important part of the course. Students will develop an understanding of the ways in which writers' choices of form, structure and language shape meaning and learn how to express informed and independent opinions on literary texts orally and in writing. HL incorporates the study of six literary works and SL four works.

Writing and speaking critically about language and literature will enable students to develop and refine their communication skills to become better readers, writers, speakers and thinkers, as well as develop cultural sensitivity. The course looks at language in everyday context and in mass communication through multi-modal texts. The literature component covers both critical analysis and contextual studies.

Assessment	Weighting	
	SL	HL
Paper 1: Guided Textual Analysis HL Candidates write about two non-literary texts. SL Candidates write about one of two non-literary texts	35%	35%
Paper 2: Comparative Essay Comparative essay based on literary works	35%	25%
Individual Oral Prepared oral, followed by discussion	30%	20%
Essay (HL only) 1,200-1,500 Word Essay based on literary or non-literary texts	N/A	20%



English Literature HL & SL

Literature develops students' understanding of the techniques involved in literary criticism and encourages the ability to form independent literary judgements. This includes an appreciation of and informed personal response to literature in English across a range of texts in different forms and from different periods and cultures. The course also encourages the skills of reading, analysis and communication, in both written and spoken forms.

Students will develop an understanding of the ways in which writers' choices of form, structure and language shape meanings, and will develop the ability to produce informed, independent opinions and judgements on literary and other texts.

Texts will be chosen from a range of genres, including non-fiction and works in translation. Students at both levels will be expected to read extensively, and to work independently. At SL students will study seven texts; and at HL, where a greater emphasis is placed on comparative literary analysis, ten texts are required.

Assessment	Weighting	
	SL	HL
Paper 1: Guided Textual Analysis HL Candidates write about two literary texts. SL Candidates write about one of two literary texts	35%	35%
Paper 2: Comparative Essay Comparative essay based on literary works	35%	25%
Individual Oral Prepared oral, followed by discussion	30%	20%
Essay (HL only) 1,200-1,500 Word Essay based on literary or non-literary texts	N/A	20%



Group 2
Language Acquisition

Selecting Language Options in Group 2

Group 2 consists of two types of language course:

- **Language B** is an additional language-learning course designed for students with **some** previous learning of that language e.g. I/GCSE. It may be studied at either SL or HL.¹ At GSIS we offer HL and SL Language B and courses in German, Mandarin and French.
- **Language ab initio** is designed for students with **little or no prior experience** of the language they wish to study.² At GSIS we offer ab initio courses in Spanish and German.

In addition to the above, as outlined on page 4, students may select an additional Language A (Group 1) course in place of their Language B Option. This leads to the Bilingual Diploma.

- **Additional Language A** courses are offered in Chinese Language & Literature and German Language & Literature. The assessment criteria for these courses mirrors that for English Language and Literature on page 19

There are a number of factors that contribute to an individual's choice of language course in Group 2; language profiles are rarely identical as people can have very different aptitudes for listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Following a discussion with individuals, the Diploma Programme Coordinator and their language teachers will ensure that, as far as possible, students are following the course that is most suited to their needs and that will provide them with an appropriate academic challenge.³

1. *Language ab initio Guide (p.6, IBO, updated 2014)*
2. *Ibid. p.8*
3. *Ibid. p.7*



German, Mandarin or French HL and SL; Spanish or German ab initio

Language B is an additional language-learning course designed for students with some previous learning of that language. The main focus of the course is on language acquisition and development of language skills. These language skills will be developed through the study and use of a range of written and spoken material. Such material will extend from everyday oral exchanges to literary texts, and are related to the culture(s) concerned. There is a common syllabus at SL and HL (with literature as an additional component of the HL course). The differences between levels are determined by the assessment objectives, the depth and breadth of syllabus coverage, the assessment details, the assessment criteria, literature coverage and suggested teaching hours. The course aims to:

- Develop students' intercultural understanding, awareness of the role of language in relation to other areas of knowledge and awareness of the relationship between the languages and cultures with which they are familiar
- Enable students to understand and use the chosen language of study in a range of contexts and for a variety of purposes
- Encourage an awareness and appreciation of the different perspectives of people from other cultures through the study of texts and through social interaction
- Provide students with a basis for further study, work and leisure through the use of the language and the opportunity for enjoyment, creativity and intellectual stimulation

Students will be assessed on their ability to:

- Communicate clearly and effectively in a range of situations, demonstrating linguistic competence and intercultural understanding
- Use language appropriate to a range of interpersonal and/or cultural contexts
- Understand and use language to express and respond to a range of ideas with accuracy and fluency, analyse and respond to a range of written and spoken texts and use works of literature written in the target language of study (HL only).
- Organize ideas on a range of topics, in a clear, coherent and convincing manner.

Strong German HL students will be expected to take the Sprachdiplom II exam in Year 12 or Y13. This option is also open to SL students, whom the German teachers judge to have the potential to reach this level.



Assessment	Weighting
External Assessment	
<p>Paper 1: Productive Skills</p> <p>HL Candidates complete one writing task (450-600 words or 540-720 characters for Chinese) from a choice of three themes</p> <p>SL Candidates complete one writing task (250-400 words or 300-480 characters for Chinese) from a choice of three themes</p> <p>Ab Initio Candidates complete two written tasks, each from a choice of three</p>	25%
<p>Paper 2: Receptive Skills</p> <p>Separate sections for Listening and Reading</p> <p>Listening comprehension: Comprehension exercises on three audio passages drawn from all five themes.</p> <p>Reading comprehension: Comprehension exercises on three written texts drawn from all five themes</p>	50%
<p>Individual Oral Assessment (Internally Assessed)</p> <p>HL Candidates conduct a conversation with the teacher, based on an extract from one of the literary works studied in class, followed by a discussion based on one or more of the themes from the syllabus.</p> <p>SL Candidates conduct a conversation with the teacher, based on a visual stimulus, followed by a discussion based on an additional theme.</p> <p>AB Initio Candidates conduct a conversation with the teacher, based on a visual stimulus relevant to one or more themes of the course, followed by a discussion based upon an additional theme.</p>	25%



Group 3
Individuals and Societies

Economics HL & SL

The study of economics is essentially about dealing with scarcity, resource allocation and the methods and processes by which choices are made in order to satisfy unlimited human wants. This course covers the economic theories of microeconomics, which deal with economic variables affecting individuals, firms and markets, and the economic theories of macroeconomics, which deal with economic variables affecting countries, governments and societies. These economic theories are not to be studied in a vacuum—rather, they are to be applied to real-world issues. The main topical issues are fluctuations in economic activity, international trade, economic development and sustainability.

This economics course encourages students to develop international perspectives, fosters a concern for global issues, and raises students' awareness of their own responsibilities at a local, national and international level. The course also seeks to develop values and attitudes that will enable students to achieve a degree of personal commitment in trying to resolve these issues, appreciating our shared responsibility as citizens of an increasingly interdependent world. At the end of the course students will be able to demonstrate in-depth knowledge and critical understanding of a wide range of economic theories and concepts. They will be able to apply this knowledge and understanding to analyse both familiar and unfamiliar situations, issues and problems. They will be able to effectively evaluate evidence and arguments, make reasoned judgments and to present appropriate and well-supported conclusions

Assessment Outline	Weighting
External Assessment (3 Hours SL; 4 hours 45 Mins HL)	20% HL
Paper 1 (1 hour 15 minutes)	30% SL
An extended response paper (50 marks)	
Paper 2 (1 hour and 45 minutes)	30% HL
A data response paper (40 Marks) plus, for HL, extended response	40% SL
Students answer one question from a choice of two (20 marks)	
Paper 3 HL only (1 hour and 45 minutes)	30% HL
A policy paper (60 marks)	
Students answer two compulsory questions	
Internal Assessment	20% HL & SL
This component is internally assessed by the teacher and externally moderated by the IB at the end of the course.	
Students produce a portfolio of three commentaries, based on different sections of the syllabus and on published extracts from the news media.	
Maximum 800 words per commentary (45 marks)	



Geography HL & SL

This course addresses key ideas and debates in our world today, exploring a wide range of case studies and issues, examining and evaluating management strategies that are linked to them. The focus of the course is to understand the role of social, physical, economic and political factors, and to appreciate the interrelationships between humans and their environments, as well as the need for international co-operation.

By the end of the course, students will have developed a global perspective and appreciate the relevance of Geography to contemporary world issues. Geography students will study the core theme of Global Change, looking at issues related to population, climate change and resource consumption. In addition, SL students will study two optional themes: Sports, Leisure and Tourism, and Extreme Environments, while HL students will study the additional optional theme of Food and Health as well as the extension: Global Interactions topics. Both Standard and Higher-level students will conduct fieldwork leading to a written report.

Assessment	Weighting
External Assessment	
Paper 1 SL (1 hour 30 mins) HL (2 hours 15 mins)	35% HL
Syllabus content: Geographic themes	35% SL
SL & HL: Extreme environments; Leisure, tourism and sport	
HL (additional theme): Food and health	
Each option has a structured question and one extended answer question from a choice of two.	
Paper 2 SL & HL core (1 hour 15 mins)	25% HL
Syllabus content: Geographic perspectives – global change	40% SL
Population distribution; changing population	
Global climate – vulnerability and resilience	
Global resource consumption and security	
This paper is divided into three sections, A, B and C	
Section A: Three structured questions	
Section B: Infographic or visual stimulus with structured questions	
Section C: One extended answer question from a choice of two	
Paper 3 HL only (1 hour)	20%
Syllabus content: Geographic perspectives – global interactions	HL only
Power, places and networks	
Human development and diversity	
Global risks and resilience	
Students answer one of three essay questions.	
Internal Assessment	20% HL
Students produce a written report of up to 2500 words on a geographical investigation.	25% SL



The purpose of the fieldwork is to reinforce principal geographic concepts and skills taught in class. It provides opportunities for learning through practical work and fosters skills of cooperation, organization, investigation and presentation.	
---	--

History HL & SL

This course is concerned with individuals and societies in the widest contexts: political, social, economic, religious, technological and cultural. The aim is to explain trends and developments, and to recognise continuity and change through time and through individual events. The study of History from an international perspective is increasingly important today. In the contemporary context, one of globalization and technological development, different cultures and societies are increasingly interdependent upon one another. The History course helps to foster respect and understanding of peoples and events in cultures different from our own.

IB History students explore historical topics in a way that allows them to develop transferrable skills. Students who complete the course will not only be more knowledgeable about the past and the work of historians, but also have developed research skills, source analysis and evaluation skills, writing skills, and critical thinking skills. These skills will obviously aid them in university and beyond, whether or not they choose to work in the field of History.

During the course students also reflect on the role of the historian and the function of History in our world. Does the historian record history or create it? Can the historian be free of bias in the selection and interpretation of material? Could it be reasonably argued that the individual perception of an historian is necessary or even desirable in the interpretation and recording of history?

For the 2026-28 cohort, the IB is introducing a new curriculum guide (to be published in February 2026). Based on the information provided thus far, GSIS students will likely study either “Political and economic transitions” (Meiji Japan/the Russian Federation) OR “Conflict and Displacement” (Post WWII Displacement in Europe/Vietnam War Refugee Crisis) as their source-based paper one topics.

For paper 2, students will explore a thematic study based on one of the following topics: “Conflict”, “Authoritarian Rule”, or “Popular Movements”. Higher Level students will also examine “The Americas during the Cold War” and “Social Movements in the Americas” as the basis for their paper three exam. One focus of the new guide is a reduction in the amount of content from the current syllabus.

All students will complete an internal assessment (IA)/historical investigation, which enables candidates to demonstrate the application of their skills and knowledge to an area of particular historical interest. This area does not need to be syllabus related. The assessment demands that candidates search for, select, evaluate and use evidence to reach substantiated conclusions to a research question



Assessment	Weighting
External Assessment	
Internal Assessment	
Details of internal and external assessments will be available once the new IB guide is published.	



Social and Cultural Anthropology HL & SL

The Social and Cultural Anthropology (SCA) course offers an opportunity for students to explore and understand humankind in all its diversity through the comparative study of culture and human societies. Through studying this subject, students will come to appreciate how anthropology as a discipline contributes to an understanding of contemporary issues, physical and mental health, illness and healing, cultural inscription of meaning upon the body, globalisation and transnational identities, war and conflict, injustice, inequality and poverty and cultural and human rights. The study of SCA offers critical insight into the continuities as well as dynamics of social change and the development of societies, and challenges cultural assumptions. The observation and fieldwork component of this course gives students an opportunity for learning outside the classroom and applying their knowledge of anthropology to real life situations.

Assessment Outline	Weighting
External Assessment (4 hours 30 minutes)	
Paper 1 (2 hours)	30% HL
Section A: Three compulsory questions based on an unseen text, covering part 1 of the syllabus engaging with anthropology.	40% SL
One compulsory question focused on one of the six 'big' anthropological questions.	
Section B: HL extension – anthropological ethics.	
One compulsory question based on one of two stimuli (visual and written)	
Paper 2 (2 hour and 30 minutes)	
Section A: one compulsory question based on part 2 of the syllabus, engaging with ethnography.	45% HL
Section B: nine areas of inquiry, each containing two questions.	40% SL
Internal Assessment	25% HL & 20% SL
This component is internally assessed by the teacher and externally moderated by the IB at the end of the course.	
HL: Three compulsory activities based on part 3 of the course, engaging in anthropological practice	
1. Fieldwork proposal form	
2. Critical reflection	
3. Research report and reflection	
SL: Four compulsory activities based on part 3 of the course, engaging in anthropological practice	
1. Observation report	
2. Methodological and conceptual extension of initial fieldwork	
3. Second field work data collection and analysis	
4. Critical reflection	



Group 4
Sciences

Group 4 Sciences

Within the sciences, students explore the concepts, theories, models and techniques that underpin each subject area and through these develop their understanding of the scientific method and practical problem-solving. GSIS offers Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science and Physics at HL and SL. All courses run for two years and are divided into a comprehensive syllabus of theory and a practical programme.

August 2023 sees the inception of new courses in Group 4. Full details are yet to be published by the IBO (expected March 2023). The information provided below is correct as of the time of publication of this booklet.

Assessment for Biology, Chemistry and Physics consists of 80% from final exams and 20% from the criterion related internally assessed coursework in the form of an investigation. For Computer Science SL the split is 70% and 30% and for HL students it is 80% and 20%.

It is a requirement for successful completion of the IBDP that all students participate in the Collaborative Sciences Project (formerly Group 4 project). This is an interdisciplinary activity where students from the different Group 4 subjects work collaboratively to analyse a common scientific or technological topic or problem. It is used to assess a student's personal skills in terms of self-motivation and perseverance, ability to work within a team and self-reflection. The project forms part of the internal assessment and takes about ten hours.

In the experimental sciences, considerable emphasis is placed on learning through practical work in the laboratory.

Assessment: Biology, Chemistry and Physics		
External Assessment	Time (hrs)	Weighting
Paper 1 Paper 1A: Multiple-choice questions Paper 1B: Data-based questions (four questions that are syllabus related, addressing all themes)	1 hr 30 mins SL 2 hrs HL	36%
Paper 2 Data-based and short-answer questions Extended-response questions	1 hr 30 mins SL 2 hrs 30 mins HL	44%
Internal Assessment	Time (hrs)	Weighting
Scientific Investigation The Scientific Investigation is an open-ended task in which the student gathers and analyses data in order to answer their own formulated research question. The outcome of the Scientific Investigation will be assessed through the form of a written report. The maximum overall word count for the report is 3,000 words	10 hrs	20%



Assessment: Computer Science		
External Assessment	Time (hrs)	Weighting
Paper 1 Syllabus Content A (see below)	1 hr 15 mins SL 2 hrs HL	40% SL 35% HL
Paper 2 Syllabus Content B (see below)	1 hr 15 mins SL 2 hrs HL	40% SL 35% HL
Internal Assessment	Time (hrs)	Weighting
An individual computational solution development project comprising a product and supporting documentation	35 hrs	20% SL 35% HL



Biology HL & SL

Biology is an incredibly diverse subject, ranging from the interactions of molecules inside a cell to the global interactions of organisms with their physical environment. To treat it as a standalone subject is perhaps naïve, as a successful Biologist must have a broad scientific knowledge, with good interdisciplinary skills and a strong understanding of the scientific method. The IB Biology course is a prerequisite for many of the biological sciences at university and is a complementary course to Chemistry for those wishing to apply for the biomedical sciences.

During the course, students will develop their own individual investigation as part of their Internal Assessment, which assesses their practical skills and understanding of the scientific method.

Course Content

Concept	SL & HL Topics	HL Only Topics
Unity & Diversity	Water Nucleic acids Cell structure Diversity of organisms Evolution and speciation Conservation of biodiversity	Origins of cells Viruses Classification and cladistics
Form and function	Carbohydrates and lipids Proteins Membranes and membrane transport Organelles and compartmentalization Cell specialization Gas exchange Transport Adaptation to environment Ecological niches	Muscle and motility
Interaction and interdependence	Enzymes and metabolism Cell respiration Photosynthesis Neural signalling Integration of body systems Defence against disease Populations and communities Transfer of energy and matter	Chemical signalling
Continuity and change	DNA replication Protein synthesis Mutations and gene editing Cell and nuclear division Water potential Reproduction Inheritance Homeostasis Natural selection Sustainability and change Climate change	Gene expression
Experimental programme	Practical Work Collaborative Sciences Project Scientific Investigation	



Chemistry HL & SL

Chemistry is regarded as the central science and chemical principles underpin the physical environment in which we live. As well as being an academic subject in its own right, it is also a pre-requisite for many other courses in higher education, such as medicine, biological and environmental sciences. Most science related tertiary courses, either pure or applied, require Chemistry at IBDP level. It is a logical subject that is also much valued by professions outside of science, such as law, accountancy and politics.

Both HL/SL courses are developed through a series of topics. SL students study six topics and HL students study with some extended to a higher level. It is expected that students embarking on the course will read around the subject, be curious, and be prepared to challenge ideas and facts they encounter.

The essential principles of chemistry are studied as part of the following main topics: quantitative chemistry, atomic structure, periodicity, bonding, energetics, kinetics, equilibrium, acids and bases, oxidation and reduction, and organic chemistry. The course offers students the opportunity to combine academic study with the acquisition of practical and manipulative skills. They will complete an independent investigation of their choice in the final term of Year 12.

Concept	Topics all common to HL & SL, with HL covering the material in greater depth
Structure 1. Models of the particulate nature of matter	Introduction to the particulate nature of matter Structure 1.2 - The nuclear atom Electron configurations Counting particles by mass: The mole Ideal gases
Structure 2. Models of bonding and structure	The ionic model The covalent model The metallic model From models to materials
Structure 3. Classification of matter	The periodic table: Classification of elements Functional groups: Classification of organic compounds
Reactivity 1. What drives chemical reactions?	Measuring enthalpy change Energy cycles in reactions Energy from fuels Entropy and spontaneity
Reactivity 2. How much, how fast and how far?	How much? The amount of chemical change How fast? The rate of chemical change How far? The extent of chemical change
Reactivity 3. What are the mechanisms of chemical change?	Proton transfer reactions Electron transfer reactions Electron sharing reactions Electron-pair sharing reactions
Experimental programme	Practical Work Collaborative Sciences Project Scientific Investigation



Physics HL & SL

Physics is considered the root science as its laws apply to all of the experimental sciences. Physics seeks to understand the universe itself, from the sub-nuclear scale of quarks and leptons to the vast and expanding distances between galactic superclusters. Physicists seek to acquire knowledge through observation, creation of models to understand these observations, and formation of theories which are tested by experiment. It is an exciting time to be involved in the study of physics: gravitational waves and the Higgs boson have recently been confirmed by observation for the first time while we await, from this generation of students, an explanation of dark energy and a method for generating electricity from nuclear fusion.

Both Standard Level and Higher Level courses are challenging but rewarding. The course content is extensive and, to allow time for in-depth study of new material, the CIE IGCSE syllabus 0625 will be taken as a starting point. Each student will also undertake an individual project, recently renamed as the *Scientific Investigation*. Interested students should note that Higher Level Physics is required for most engineering courses at UK universities.

Course Content

Concept	Topics
A. Space, time and motion	Kinematics Forces and momentum Work, energy and power Rigid body mechanics Galilean and special relativity
B. The particulate nature of matter	Thermal energy transfers Greenhouse effect Gas laws Current and circuits Thermodynamics
C. Wave behaviour	Simple harmonic motion Wave model Standing waves and resonance Doppler effect Wave phenomena
D. Fields	Gravitational fields Electric and magnetic fields Motion in electromagnetic fields Induction
E. Nuclear and quantum physics	E.1 Structure of the atom Radioactive decay Fission Fusion and stars Quantum physics
Experimental programme	Practical Work Scientific Investigation Collaborative Sciences Project

Computer Science HL & SL

The Computer Science course develops an understanding of the fundamental concepts of computational thinking as well as knowledge of how computers and other digital devices operate. This is an extremely useful course to study prior to any application for a university course in the subject. It is also immensely useful for any student intending to go on to study any form of engineering and, to a lesser extent, science in higher education, as a computer-programming course is almost always a part of the first-year programme.

The Computer Science course is engaging, accessible, inspiring and rigorous. It draws on a wide spectrum of knowledge, enables and empowers innovation, exploration and the acquisition of further knowledge. The course is the study of the theory, design and architecture of computational systems, use of computers, and programming of digital devices to solve real world problems. Computer science requires an understanding of programming, systems architecture and the underlying concepts of computational thinking. An awareness of the ethical issues related to, and the influence of, computer science on culture and society is an integrated part of the course.

HL/SL students study a common core and option consisting of system fundamentals, computer organisation, networks, databases, problem-solving and programming. HL students will study a further three topics and be required to research various aspects of the subject which may include new technical concepts and content to greater depth.

Component	Assessment	
	HL	SL
Syllabus content		
A Concepts of computer science		
A.1 Computer fundamentals	Paper 1 35%	Paper 1 40%
A.2 Networks		
A.3 Databases		
A.4 Machine learning		
B Computational thinking and problem-solving		
B.1 Computational thinking	Paper 2 35%	Paper 2 40%
B.2 Programming		
B.3 Object oriented programming (OOP)		
B.4 Abstract data types (HL only)		
Case study		
Internal assessment	30%	20%
The computational solution		
Collaborative sciences project	10 hours	10 hours



Group 5
Mathematics

Mathematics

At GSIS we offer the following two courses.

1. **Mathematics: Analysis and approaches** course will be offered at both SL and HL. It is designed for students who enjoy developing their mathematics to become fluent in the construction of mathematical arguments and develop strong skills in mathematical thinking. They will explore real and abstract applications, sometimes with technology, and will enjoy the thrill of mathematical problem solving and generalisation.
2. **Mathematics: Applications and interpretation course** will be offered at both SL and HL for students who are interested in developing their mathematics for describing our world, modelling and solving practical problems using the power of technology. Students who take Mathematics: Applications and interpretation will be those who enjoy mathematics best when seen in a practical context.

For both these courses, students will need a graphical calculator (Casio Fx CG 60 or similar).

Mathematics: Analysis and approaches

Syllabus outline

Syllabus component	Topic teaching %	
	SL	HL
Topic 1 - Number and algebra	12%	16%
Topic 2 – Functions	14%	13%
Topic 3 - Geometry and trigonometry	17%	21%
Topic 4 - Statistics and probability	18%	14%
Topic 5 - Calculus	19%	23%
The toolkit and mathematical exploration Investigative, problem-solving and modelling skills development leading to an individual exploration. The exploration is a piece of written work that involves investigating an area of mathematics.	20%	13%

Mathematics: analysis and approaches assessment outline

Assessment component	Weighting
External assessment	80%
Paper 1	40% SL, 30% HL
No Calculator allowed.	
Paper 2	40% SL, 30% HL
Calculator required.	



Paper 3 (HL only)	20% HL
Calculator required.	
Internal assessment	20%
This component is internally assessed by the teacher and externally moderated by the IB at the end of the course.	
Mathematical exploration	
Internal assessment in mathematics is an individual exploration. This is a piece of written work that involves investigating an area of mathematics.	

Concept	SL & HL Topics	HL Only Topics
Number and Algebra	Scientific notation Arithmetic and geometric sequences and series Laws of logarithms and exponentials Solving exponential equations Simple proof Binomial theorem	Permutations and combinations Partial fractions Complex numbers Proof by induction, contradiction and counter-example Systems of linear equations
Functions	Equations of straight lines Concepts and properties of functions and their graphs Solving equations both analytically and graphically Transformation of graphs	Factor and remainder theorems Sums and products of roots of polynomials Rational functions Odd and even functions Self-inverse functions Solving function inequalities Modulus functions
Geometry and Trigonometry	Volume and surface area of 3d solids Right-angled and non-right-angled trigonometry Radian measure The unit circle Pythagorean identity, double angle identities for sine and cosine Composite trigonometric functions Solving trigonometric equations	Reciprocal trigonometric ratios Inverse trigonometric functions Compound angle identities Double angle identity for tangent Vector theory Applications with lines and planes Vector algebra.
Calculus	Differentiation Finding equations of normals and tangents Optimisation Kinematics Definite and indefinite integration	Continuity and differentiability Convergence and divergence Differentiation from first principles Limits and L'Hopital's rule

		Implicit differentiation Derivatives of inverse and reciprocal trigonometric functions Integration by substitution and parts Volumes of revolution First order differential equations Maclaurin series
--	--	---

Mathematics: Applications and Interpretation

Syllabus Outline

Syllabus component	Topic teaching %	
	SL	HL
Topic 1 - Number and algebra	10%	11%
Topic 2 – Functions	21%	18%
Topic 3 - Geometry and trigonometry	12%	19%
Topic 4 - Statistics and probability	24%	22%
Topic 5 - Calculus	13%	17%
The toolkit and mathematical exploration Investigative, problem-solving and modelling skills development leading to an individual exploration. The exploration is a piece of written work that involves investigating an area of mathematics.	20%	13%

Concept	SL & HL Topics	HL Only Topics
Number and Algebra	Scientific notation Arithmetic and geometric sequences and series Applications in finance including loan repayments Simple treatment of logarithms and exponentials Simple proof Approximations and errors	Laws of logarithms Complex numbers and their practical applications Matrices and their applications for solving systems of equations, for geometric transformations, and their applications to probability
Functions	Creating, fitting and using models with linear, exponential, natural logarithm, cubic and simple trigonometric functions	Use of log-log graphs, graph transformations, creating, fitting and using models with further trigonometric, logarithmic, rational, logistic and piecewise functions
Geometry and Trigonometry	Volume and surface area of 3d solids Right-angled and non-right-angled trigonometry Surface area and volume of composite 3d solids Establishing optimum positions and paths using Voronoi diagrams	Vector concepts and their applications in kinematics Applications of adjacency matrices Tree and cycle algorithms
Statistics and Probability	Collecting data and using sampling techniques Presenting data in graphical form Measures of central tendency and spread Correlation using Pearson's product-moment and Spearman's rank correlation coefficients Regression Calculating probabilities Probability diagrams Normal distribution Chi-squared test for independence and goodness of fit	Binomial and Poisson distributions Designing data collection methods, tests for reliability and validity Hypothesis testing and confidence intervals
Calculus	Differentiation Optimisation Simple integration and the trapezium/trapezoidal rule to calculate areas of irregular shapes	Kinematics Solving models involving differential equations Slope fields Coupled and second-order differential equations in context

Mathematics: Applications and Interpretation Assessment Outline

Assessment component	Weighting
External assessment	80%
Paper 1	40% SL; 30% HL
Calculator required.	
Paper 2	40% SL; 30% HL
Calculator Required.	
Paper 3 (HL Only)	20% HL
Calculator required.	
Internal assessment	20%
This component is internally assessed by the teacher and externally moderated by the IB at the end of the course.	
Mathematical exploration	
Internal assessment in mathematics is an individual exploration. This is a piece of written work that involves investigating an area of mathematics. (20 marks)	



Group 6
The Arts

Visual Arts HL & SL

The IB Music Art-making as inquiry is at the center of the new DP Visual Arts course, which fosters creativity, communication, critical thinking, and collaboration. Students learn that through art-making, they are empowered to engage, transform, and emerge as individuals and members of a community. The higher level (HL) course provides solid preparation for students wishing to continue their studies or careers in the visual and creative arts. More broadly, the syllabus equips students with essential skills for a rapidly evolving world, helping them stand out among their peers.

Throughout the course, students engage iteratively with three core areas:

Create: This area focuses on nurturing students' art-making practices, developing a personal visual language, and experimenting with materials, techniques, and strategies.

Connect: This area situates students' art-making within personal, local, and global contexts, encouraging them to make connections with the work of other artists.

Communicate: This area develops both visual and written presentation skills, teaching students how to curate and share their artwork effectively while engaging in dialogue and critique.

At the end of the Visual Arts course, students submit digital evidence demonstrating how they learned to create, connect, and communicate. This evidence comprises three distinct tasks:

1. Art-Making Inquiry Portfolio: A common task for both SL and HL students.
2. SL Connection Study Task and HL Artist Project Task.

The Artist Project task requires the sustained realization and curation of a stand-alone artwork, informed by connections with other artists' works and by feedback. In the second year, HL students enjoy greater autonomy, developing a project of their choice from start to finish. They consider what and how they wish to communicate to their audience(s) within a specific context, allowing for further development of their practice and a deeper understanding of cultural significance.

The Connections Study allows SL students to explore situating their own artwork without having to create a new piece. They select one resolved artwork from their body of work submitted for internal assessment and provide evidence of connections between this piece, their own context, and the artwork of other artists, demonstrating an understanding of cultural significance.

3. The Internal Assessment (IA) Task focuses on a coherent body of five resolved artworks for both HL and SL. While the number of artworks is the same, the tasks are differentiated. HL students must include evidence of their selection process, including images of three non-selected artworks in the rationale, and demonstrate critical analysis through a short accompanying text.



The focus of the IA task remains on the coherence of the student's body of resolved artworks, considering both conceptual realization and technical resolution. Documentation of an exhibition is no longer required, which alleviates stress at the end of the course and supports student work across a wider variety of art-making forms.

Overview of the distinction between SL and HL tasks:

SL Visual Arts	HL Visual Arts
External Assessment (Graded by examiners)	
40% Art-making Inquiries Portfolio	30% Art-making Inquiries Portfolio
Curated visual and written evidence (up to 15 screens, max 3,000 words) of your personal investigations, discoveries, creations, and critical reflections. This demonstrates your art-making as inquiry, showing work with a variety of forms and strategies.	
20% Connections Study	30% Artist Project
A study (up to 10 screens, max 2,500 words) situating one of your resolved artworks in relation to your own context and at least two artworks by different artists.	A stand-alone resolved artwork, proposal, investigation of connections (two artworks by different artists), dialogues for refinement, and a video showing the artwork realized in context (up to 12 screens, max 2,500 words + 3-minute video).
Internal Assessment (Graded by teachers and moderated externally)	
40% Resolved artworks	40% Selected resolved artworks
Submit a coherent body of five resolved artworks and a written rationale (max 700 words).	Submit a coherent body of five selected resolved artworks from a wider production of at least eight works .Includes a rationale (max 700 words) and five artwork texts (max 1,000 words total) to situate each piece.

Music IB HL & SL

The IB Music syllabus was newly revised and released in 2020, for first examination in 2022. Although much of the course content remains the same, the assessments are altered to create a more integrated curriculum, bringing the skills of listening & analysis, performance and composition together. One of the most significant changes is that there is now no final examination.

The course is ideal for students who:

- are interested in both the practical and theoretical aspects of music-making
- respond to a creative approach to composition and performance
- value collaboration (particularly for HL)

By the end of the course, students will have:

- broadened their musical horizons through engagement with diverse musical material
- analysed a wide range of music
- engaged with music technology as a compulsory part of the course
- developed as holistic musicians with experience as creators and performers
- developed both independent and collaborative working skills

The course is built around four Areas of Inquiry, in personal, local and global contexts:

- Music for sociocultural and political expression (e.g. protest songs, liturgical music, national anthems)
- Music for listening and performance (e.g. Western chamber music, cool Jazz, experimental music)
- Music for dramatic impact, movement and entertainment (e.g. music for film, music for ballet, musical theatre)
- Music technology in the electronic and digital age (e.g. electronic dance music, elektronische musik, technology in popular music production)

Ideally students starting the IB Music course in Year 12 would already have the following skills:

- Grade 7 level or above performing on one or more instrument(s) *
- Grade 5 theory

** It is not essential to actually have done the grade, simply to play around that standard. Students who play instruments like drums or guitar may not have taken music exams but can definitely choose IB Music as an option.*

Assessment

SL and HL candidates complete the following three components:



1. Exploring music in context (SL 30%, HL 20%)

Students select samples of their work for a portfolio submission. Students submit written work (up to 2,400 words) demonstrating engagement with, and understanding of, diverse musical material, and practical exercises in creating (1 minute) and performing (2 minutes).

2. Experimenting with music (SL 30%, HL 20%)

Students submit an experimentation report (1,500 words) with evidence of their musical processes in creating and performing in two areas of inquiry in a local and/or global context. The report provides a rationale and commentary for each process. Students submit practical musical evidence of the experimentation process in creating (three) and performing (three) (total duration 10 minutes).

3. Presenting music (SL 40%, HL 30%)

Students submit a collection of works demonstrating engagement with diverse musical material from four areas of inquiry. The submission contains programme notes (600 words), presenting as a creator (6 minutes) and presenting as a performer (12 minutes).

HL students only complete an additional component:

4. The contemporary music-maker (HL 30%)

Students are required to work in collaboration with at least one other student. Students submit a continuous multimedia presentation (15 minutes) documenting their real-life project which evidences the project proposal, the process and evaluation, and the realized project, or curated selections of it.



Theatre HL & SL

We are in an enviable position in Hong Kong, in that we have access to an incredible range of high-quality professional theatre and practitioners who are locally based or internationally touring. IB Theatre is an incredibly exciting course which gives you the opportunity to develop and acquire new practical skills but also to embrace and become the embodiment of a world citizen, eager to explore the world and be a creative force within it!

Theatre is a composite art that is forever evolving in new forms. IB Theatre will lead you in an exciting and rigorous investigation of the nature of theatre from the page to the stage. The course is a combination of performance, production, research and analysis of western and non-western theatre. As Theatre students, you will investigate both traditional as well as alternative forms of theatre, viewing them culturally as well as stylistically, while engaging in both the practical and the theoretical. This course emphasises the importance of working individually and as a member of an ensemble.

At the core lies a concern with clarity of understanding, critical thinking, reflective analysis, effective involvement and imaginative synthesis – all of which will be achieved through practical engagement in theatre. The course is completed by the end of the Easter term, there is no final written examination as assessment is 100% coursework (as detailed below).

Students will also go on theatre trips and participate in workshops led by a range of theatre practitioners - including professional actors, directors, and theatre companies. These experiences help students deepen their understanding of the creative process involved in professional theatre-making. In most cases these will be school funded; however, there may be a few theatre trips which will require parental contribution.

Course Content

Units	Content
Introduction to the course and Theatre History: beginning Year 1	Outlining the requirements and timelines for the course. An overview of Theatre timelines and traditions in Western and World Theatre through group research and presentation of knowledge.
Production Proposal: started in Year 1 and completed by half term of Year 2 Solo Piece: process starts beginning Year 2 presented middle of Spring Term Year 2	Production Proposal: Students at SL and HL choose a play and formulate a vision for the design and theoretical staging of the entire play text for an audience. These ideas are presented in the form of a proposal. Solo Piece: theatre theory is put into practice by creating and presenting a solo piece of theatre based on a practitioner of their own choice. Theorists could include Stanislavski, Artaud, Grotowski, Brecht, Brook, Lepage, Berkoff.



<p>Research Presentation: focus is chosen by end of Year 1 and final presentation is middle of Easter Term Year 2</p>	<p>Research Presentation: Students at SL and HL plan, deliver and video record an individual research presentation (15 minutes maximum) in which they provide evidence of their academic and practical exploration and learning of a world theatre tradition they have not previously studied</p> <p>By attending workshops, performances and through personal research, students find a convention of a theatre tradition which they wish to explore further. They develop an understanding of the convention by learning a new skill and then applying it to a moment in a play in order to demonstrate the convention.</p> <p>Previous presentations have focused on Peking Opera, Commedia dell'Arte, Kabuki and Noh Theatre.</p>
<p>Collaborative Project: the research is completed over the summer break, performance takes place towards end of Year 2 first term, final portfolio submitted by Chinese New Year.</p>	<p>Work as an ensemble to create a piece of theatre following the example of the creative practices of a professional theatre company. The focus is ensemble building, improvising and devising theatre.</p> <p>Where possible students attend workshops by the company chosen. Possible companies are DV8, Frantic Attack, KEPOW!, Complicité, Kneehigh</p>



Assessment

Assessment Objectives	Weighting/ Level
<p>External Assessment</p> <p>Solo Theatre Piece (HL only)</p> <p>Create and present a solo theatre piece and submit:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A report (2,500 words maximum) plus a list of all primary and secondary sources cited. 2. A continuous unedited video recording of the whole solo theatre piece (4–7 minutes maximum). 	<p>HL only - 35%</p>
<p>Research Presentation (SL and HL)</p> <p>Students plan and deliver an individual presentation in which they outline and physically demonstrate their research into a convention of a theatre tradition chosen from a given list.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A video recording of the student’s research presentation (15 minutes maximum). 2. A list of all sources cited and any additional resources used by the student during the presentation. 	<p>HL 20%</p> <p>SL 30%</p>
<p>Collaborative Project (SL and HL)</p> <p>Students collaboratively create and present an original piece of theatre to an audience (7-10 minutes max) created from a starting point of their own choice.</p> <p>Each student submits:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A project report (a maximum of 10 pages of written text and images, with written text not exceeding 4,000 words) plus a list of all sources used. 2. A video recording of the final piece (7–10 minutes maximum). 	<p>HL 25%</p> <p>SL 40%</p>
<p>Internal Assessment - Production Proposal (SL and HL)</p> <p>Students choose a published play and develop ideas regarding how it should be staged for an audience.</p> <p>Each student submits:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A production proposal (a maximum of 12 pages of written text and images, with written text not exceeding 4,000 words) plus a list of all sources used. 	<p>HL 20%</p> <p>SL 30%</p>

IB Diploma Options Form (for Y11 Students)

THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED TO YOUR CLASS TEACHER BY: 19 MARCH 2026

NAME: **CLASS:**

The programme of study in Y12-Y13 is the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP). A student taking the IBDP must follow the Core of the programme (ToK, EE and CAS) and take six subjects, one each from six subject groups.

Subjects

Choose a one subject of from each of the groups below. Three selections should be at Higher Level (HL) and three selections at Standard Level (SL)

Group 1: Studies in Language and Literature		
English Literature	HL <input type="checkbox"/>	SL <input type="checkbox"/>
English Language and Literature	HL <input type="checkbox"/>	SL <input type="checkbox"/>

Group 2: Studies in Language Acquisition		
German B	HL <input type="checkbox"/>	SL <input type="checkbox"/>
Chinese B	HL <input type="checkbox"/>	SL <input type="checkbox"/>
French B	HL <input type="checkbox"/>	SL <input type="checkbox"/>
Ab Initio German		SL <input type="checkbox"/>
Ab Initio Spanish		SL <input type="checkbox"/>
German A Literature		SL <input type="checkbox"/>
Chinese A Language and Literature		SL <input type="checkbox"/>

Group 3: Individuals and Societies		
Economics	HL <input type="checkbox"/>	SL <input type="checkbox"/>
Geography	HL <input type="checkbox"/>	SL <input type="checkbox"/>
History	HL <input type="checkbox"/>	SL <input type="checkbox"/>
Social and Cultural Anthropology (SCA)	HL <input type="checkbox"/>	SL <input type="checkbox"/>

Group 4: Experimental Sciences		
Biology	HL <input type="checkbox"/>	SL <input type="checkbox"/>
Computer Science	HL <input type="checkbox"/>	SL <input type="checkbox"/>
Chemistry	HL <input type="checkbox"/>	SL <input type="checkbox"/>
Physics	HL <input type="checkbox"/>	SL <input type="checkbox"/>

Group 5: Mathematics		
Mathematics Analysis and approaches	HL <input type="checkbox"/>	SL <input type="checkbox"/>
Mathematics Applications and Interpretation	HL <input type="checkbox"/>	SL <input type="checkbox"/>

Group 6: Creative Arts or Elective		
Music	HL <input type="checkbox"/>	SL <input type="checkbox"/>
Visual Arts	HL <input type="checkbox"/>	SL <input type="checkbox"/>
Theatre Studies	HL <input type="checkbox"/>	SL <input type="checkbox"/>
Elective (from Groups 3 or 4). Please specify:	HL <input type="checkbox"/>	SL <input type="checkbox"/>

Total number of subjects selected:

HL: SL:

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____

Date: _____



